

For immediate release
November 2, 2006

PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BORDER WASTEWATER AND STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) announces a public meeting of the USIBWC Citizens' Forum at 6:00 p.m. on November 14 at the Imperial Beach Community Room, 825 Imperial Beach Boulevard, Imperial Beach, California. The purpose of the forum is to promote the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the community about the Commission's projects and related issues in the area.

The meeting will feature a presentation about efforts to control erosion and storm water flows in the Tijuana River Watershed at Los Laureles Canyon (also known as Goat Canyon in the United States) on the U.S.-Mexico border. The Tijuana River Watershed is binational, with two-thirds located on the Mexican side of the border. Los Laureles Canyon is one of five canyons that drain directly into the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (TRNERR) in the United States. Unfortunately, this fragile ecosystem is suffering impacts from sediment, trash, and pollution that cross the border at Los Laureles Canyon during the rainy season. Oscar Romo, Coastal Training Program Coordinator for the TRNERR, will give an update on efforts to address these issues.

Additionally, Paul Ganster, Chair of the Southwest Consortium for Environmental Research and Policy (SCERP), along with Binational Watershed Advisory Council (BWAC) Co-chairs Elsa Saxod and Laura Silvan, will discuss the BWAC, which is working on joint planning between the United States and Mexico for the Tijuana River watershed. Based in part on the success of this watershed planning process as well as the Binational Rio Grande Summit organized by the Commission in 2005, SCERP selected the topic of "Means and Mechanisms for Collaborative Planning and Operations of Shared and Transboundary Watersheds" for its 2006 annual policy conference, Border Institute VIII. The presenters will give an update on activities of the BWAC based upon the

findings of Border Institute VIII and will discuss the roadmap toward cooperative watershed planning.

In other business, Carlos Peña, Special Projects Engineer for the USIBWC, will present an update on the USIBWC canyon collectors and the impact on these structures of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) planned triple fence. As part of its border sanitation project, the USIBWC operates the collectors at Goat Canyon and Smugglers Gulch to capture renegade sewage flows that enter the United States from Tijuana; the wastewater is then pumped to the USIBWC's South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP) for treatment. To accommodate construction of the triple fence in this area, DHS is coordinating and funding the relocation of the canyon collectors. Construction of the new canyon collectors and related work is expected in 2007 and 2008. The new canyon collectors will be placed into operation before the old collectors are disabled, preventing disruption of service.

Peña will also present an update on the Commission's progress toward implementation of Minute 311, a Commission agreement on the San Diego-Tijuana border sanitation project. The USIBWC in February entered into a contract with Bajagua, LLC for the company to develop at its own expense a wastewater treatment plant in Tijuana. Effluent from the SBIWTP will be sent to the Tijuana plant for secondary treatment. This alternative would also provide for treatment of an additional volume of raw sewage from Tijuana. Once the plant becomes operational, the United States will pay Bajagua for sewage treatment services, subject to the availability of federal appropriations. More recently, the USIBWC and Bajagua have been working with Mexican authorities through the Mexican Section of the Commission to refine the project and prepare a Request for Qualifications for firms interested in bidding on a design-build-operate contract for the project.

A complete agenda is attached. The event is free and the public is encouraged to attend. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting can call 619-662-7600 or e-mail sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov.

For more information:

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915-832-4175

USIBWC CITIZENS' FORUM
Tuesday, November 14, 2006, 6:00 p.m.
Imperial Beach Community Room
825 Imperial Beach Blvd.
Imperial Beach, CA 91932

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions - Mayda Winter, Co-Chair
- Update from the SCERP Border Institute VIII: "Means and Mechanisms for Collaborative Planning and Operations of Shared and Transboundary Watersheds" - Paul Ganster, Chair, Southwest Consortium for Environmental Research & Policy (SCERP), and Elsa Saxod and Laura Silvan, Co-chairs of the Binational Watershed Advisory Council
- Environmental Projects in the Los Laureles Canyon in Tijuana, Baja California - Oscar Romo, Coastal Training Program Coordinator for the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve
- Proposed Changes of the USIBWC Canyon Collectors as a Result of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Triple Fence Project - Carlos Peña, Special Projects Engineer, USIBWC
- Update on Implementation of the Proposed Secondary Treatment Plant Upgrade for the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant - Carlos Peña, Special Projects Engineer, USIBWC
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time.

For more information, call 619-662-7600 or e-mail sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov.